

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: October 4, 2001

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-67)

TO: Jay Marcotte
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Install Fish Screens to Protect ESA Listed Steelhead and Bull Trout in the Walla Walla Basin.

Project No: 2001-039-00

Wildlife Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis
(See App. A of the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS): 1.15 Fish Passage Enhancement - Fishways.

Location: Various Walla Walla River Basin Irrigation Diversions, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), the Walla Walla County Conservation District.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to provide cost share for a program that will protect ESA-listed salmonid species in the Walla Walla River Basin through the installation of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) approved fish screens on up to 197 irrigation diversions in the basin.

ESA-listed steelhead and bull trout are presently at risk in the Walla Walla Basin as the result of a combination of factors that primarily involve insufficient flow, extensive habitat degradation, and mortality from surface water diversions. Unscreened or improperly screened diversions can damage fish scaling and induce stress, both of which can be lethal. They are also known to cause migration delays and increased predation; impinge fish against screen surfaces; or, in cases where screen mesh size is too large, allow juvenile fish to be drawn directly into functioning irrigation systems resulting in direct mortality. The goal of this project is to eliminate imminent mortality risks to ESA-listed fish arising from inadequate irrigation diversions in the Walla Walla Basin by upgrading screens to current state and federal juvenile fish screen standards.

This Supplement Analysis covers only those screen upgrades and/or installations that will meet the NMFS no effect standard (NMFS, January 16, 2001). All other screen upgrades and/or installations in the Walla Walla River Basin associated with this project will require additional NEPA analysis and documentation prior to implementation.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Mike Pelissier with the Walla Walla County Conservation District and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Only those screen projects that meet the requirements listed in the January 16, 2001 NMFS No Effect Letter are covered under this Supplement Analysis. To meet the no effect standards projects must have no construction impacts, the work must be done in the dry, and there must be no potential for sediment

delivery to streams with ESA-listed fish species. The subject projects will consist of simple “bolt-on” screen devices attached to intake pipes and will involve negligible bed and bank disturbance. All work will take place in isolation from flowing waters. Any projects that do not meet the NMFS no effect standard will require additional ESA consultation prior to implementation.

Cultural or historic resources will not be affected by the proposed screen installations. These “bolt-on” screens will involve only negligible ground disturbance and will not involve the removal or modification of any known historic structures. In the unlikely event that archaeological, historical, or cultural material is encountered during installation, an archaeologist will be notified immediately and work halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed.

This project represents a collaborative effort between WDFW, WA Department of Ecology, the Walla Walla County Conservation District, and landowners and private irrigation districts located throughout the Walla Walla Basin. The Walla Walla County Conservation District is a member of the Washington/Oregon Bi-State Technical Workgroup that includes WDFW, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NMFS, WA Department of Ecology, the Columbia Conservation District, Confederated Tribes, the Walla Walla Watershed Council, OR Department of Fish and Wildlife, OR Department of Environmental Quality, OR Water Resources Department, as well as local landowners and conservation groups. Notification of this project has been widely publicized within the Washington/Oregon Bi-State Technical Workgroup.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 7.6A.2, 7.6B.3, & 7.8E.1, of the Northwest Power Planning Council’s Fish and Wildlife Program. This Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and, 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Shannon C. Stewart

Shannon C. Stewart

Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 10-09-2001

Attachments:

NEPA Compliance Checklist

NMFS SRFB No Effect Projects Memo

WDFW Cooperative Compliance Review Program, Screen Installation, No Effect Determination

cc: (w/o attachments)

Mike Pelissier- Walla Walla County Conservation District